

“I’M TELLING!”  
By Marcia Goldstein  
Laguna Woods Democratic Club

Children, if they are lucky, live in a home where justice and fair play are the norm. So when your big brother, yet again, messes with your doll house and puts the toilet in the kitchen and the bed on the roof, you say, “I’m telling!” You run to your mother, and she deals with the situation. Johnny is made to apologize and put everything back where it belongs. He gets no dessert after dinner that night, and you feel safe once again.

We former children all know that it gets a little trickier as we venture into the wider world. In grade school we quickly learn that, although adults are ostensibly in charge, on the playground there are sometime lapses in justice that cannot be addressed by “telling.”

As we grow in years, we expand our concerns to the wider society. Sadly, it happens that, at this particular time in our history, we are reeling in a world where it seems that no responsible adult is in charge.

We see injustice with no redress. We see racism in its most naked form in decades. We see our air, water, soil, and ocean polluted. We see lawmakers selling themselves and the country out to their wealthy donors. We see the poverty of low-wage working people and their resultant poor housing, poor education, poor nutrition, and poor health.

Worst of all we see our government led by a president and enabled by a Republican party with no standard of ethics, morality, or decency – or even any obligation to honor the offices in which they serve. We gnash our teeth at the usurpation of power by the corrupt and self-serving and despair at the frightful rise of ideological fanaticism.

So what are we going to do in a world where no responsible adult is in charge? Who do we “tell” about this? Do not lose hope. There are short run and long run options to deal with your concerns. The first option is as near as your keyboard.

Put your thoughts down on paper and share them with a wider audience that will be interested in what you have to say. Start with the editor of your newspaper or magazines you subscribe to. Don’t forget your clubs’ newsletters. Share your take on a problem and offer your solution. Point with pride and view with alarm.

Do not underestimate your unique background, perspective, and expertise on all of the social issues that we confront. You will feel better when you have shared your thoughts with others and you will get back some of that feeling you had as a child, that you had someone to “tell,” and they listened.

In the long run you will feel even better if you work to ensure that our world rights itself. Keep in mind that it is not such a long run, really, with an election coming up in November. Of course you will vote – that is a given – but you will find great benefit in putting more energy into volunteering in local political activities.

Knowing that you are doing your part to replace a government that shamelessly inflicts harm on this country and injustice on its citizens will bring you a great deal of psychic relief. As concerned citizens, we vote, we volunteer, we work toward social justice. We become the adults in the scenario, the ones upon whom the less fortunate must rely when it is time to “tell” someone about injustice.

August 19, 2020